

strategic planning (9), Malphurs's call for more and better planning is clearly needed. Malphurs has also done more than simply appeal for change—he has also provided step-by-step instructions so that every church leader can strategically guide their congregation into the future. These leaders should, however, remain open to the mysterious workings of God, who may choose to lead his church through a process different from that proposed by Malphurs.

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Propp, William H. C. *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB, vol. 2. New York: Doubleday, 1999. xl + 680 pp. Hardcover, \$44.95.

The book under review is the first of a projected two-volume set. Since Propp considers the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1-21) as the midpoint of a bipartite work, the division between chapters 1-18 and 19-40 is purely a practical one based on the length of the material. The author writes lucidly and shows a masterful command of the scholarly literature. His style is well suited for the Anchor Bible series, which aims at reaching a wide, diverse audience, while maintaining high standards of biblical scholarship.

The work begins, after typical preliminary matters such as a table of contents, with a translation of the entire text. This is followed by "Introduction," "Bibliography," and "Analysis, Notes and Comments." The latter treats the book of Exodus by sections. Under each section there are Translation, Analysis, Notes, and Comments. Analysis includes textual notes, source analysis, and redaction analysis. Notes deal with matters of interpretation. Comments include extended discussions.

Propp categorizes the narrative as a "heroic adventure story or fairy tale" (32) based on the categories suggested by V. I. Propp. The author's basic approach is anthropological, which is evident in his desire to understand the social realities behind the text. For example, he interprets the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Exod 12:1-13:16) as "primarily a rite of riddance" (434). This festival originated together with the paschal meal, but the two institutions were separated in the late monarchic period (428). Central to the author's anthropological approach is the Documentary Hypothesis, albeit with the innovative twist that the author sees more E material than J material in Exodus (50). Since the discussion of the validity of the Documentary Hypothesis is planned for Appendix A in volume 2, it is best to await its publication before evaluating his source criticism.

My comments here will focus primarily on Propp's translation. His preference for the literal rather than idiomatic is certainly laudable. However, a translation must do more than simply give the Hebrew in English words, which would result in a superfluous work, since one would need to know Hebrew to make sense of the translation. A comparison of the author's treatment of two words will suffice to illustrate some of the problems with what he calls a "hyperliteral" translation.

The author's translation of almost all occurrences of נֶפֶשׁ "nefesh" as "soul" (1:5 (2x); 4:19; 12:4, 15, 16, 19; 16:16), though apparently consistent, obscures the

fact that the same word may have different meanings in different contexts, and that the semantic range of the English word “soul” does not match exactly the semantic range of its Hebrew counterpart. Propp apparently realizes this in his one exception, Exod 15:9, which he translates, “My gullet will be full of them,” rather than, “My *soul* will be full of them.” Nevertheless, the word נֶפֶשׁ “*nefesh*” has a wider semantic range than just “soul” and “gullet.” Take for example, Exod 1:5, which he translated, “Now, all of the *soul* coming from Jacob’s *thigh* was seventy *souls*.” Why not “all the persons . . . were seventy persons”? Furthermore, both occurrences of the word are morphologically in the singular, a fact not clearly reflected in the author’s translation, and it is necessary to know Hebrew to realize that the singular נֶפֶשׁ “*nefesh*” is used in a collective sense, something that is not possible for the English word “soul.” Of what use is a translation if one must know Hebrew to understand the translation? This problem calls into question the usefulness (or even the possibility) of a hyperliteral translation.

On the other hand, Propp’s treatment of the word דָּבָר “*davar*” is anything but literal. It is generally translated “word” (4:10, 15, 28, 30; 5:9; 8:6, 9, 27; 9:20, 21; 12:35; 14:12; 16:16, 32; 18:16). But he also translates it otherwise according to context, including “thing” (1:18; 9:4, 5, 6; 18:14, 17, 18, 23), “affair” (2:14,15; 18:11), “matter” (5:19; 8:8; 12:24; 16:4; 18:19, 22 [2x], 26 [2x]), and even “whit” (5:11). This sensitivity to context is certainly proper because these various meanings of דָּבָר “*davar*” are not interchangeable. For example, one could not make sense of translations such as, “not a *word* is deducted from your work” (5:11), or “I am not an *affairs* man” (4:10), or “a day’s *word* in its day” (5:19), or “no *word* will die” (9:4) [These are Propp’s translations, except that I transposed his various translations of דָּבָר “*davar*”].

Why should the translation of נֶפֶשׁ “*nefesh*” be rigid in contrast to the contextual rendering of דָּבָר “*davar*”? Though no translation can be completely consistent, what Propp calls a “hyperliteral” translation results in magnifying the inconsistencies.

On the whole, Propp’s book contains a wealth of information and is a useful resource. Though other scholars will certainly disagree with some of his conclusions, his work is an important contribution. Another important contribution, the commentary by George W. Coats on *Exodus 1-18* (The Forms of Old Testament Literature, vol. 2A [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999]), appeared too late to be included in Propp’s bibliography.

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TARSEE LI

Quinn, Jerome D., and William C. Wacker. *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*. Eerdmans Critical Commentary, ed. David Noel Freeman. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. lxxxvii + 918 pp. Hardcover, \$65.00.

This tome is one of the first volumes of the Eerdmans Critical Commentary Series (ECC). The ECC series is slated to cover both the OT and NT. With a plethora of commentaries already available, one may be tempted to wonder why there is a need for yet another commentary series. According to the editorial